REMARKS

The Office Action dated February 14, 2008 has been received and carefully considered. The following remarks are being submitted as a full and complete response to the Office Action.

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate therein certain features originally recited in dependent claim 5. Namely, the amended independent claim now clarifies that the biasing mechanism (9) is designed so that during depression of the head placement member (3), a vertical positional relationship between a line of action of the spring force of the spring member (21, 26) and the pivotable connecting portion (link shaft 16) of the link members of each of the X-shaped links (11) is reversed, so that the X-shaped links (11) are biased toward a lower contracting direction by the spring member (21, 26).

Certain clarifying amendments have also been made to claims 8, 9 and 13, which should be self-explanatory. Namely, claims 8 and 9 have been revised to better describe the operation of the rotatable shaft (20) as an adjusting mechanism for adjusting a height of the head placement member in a non-depressed state (see, page 36, lines 6-19, of the present specification) and to clarify that the tool inserting hole is disposed in the head placement member adjacent to an end of the rotatable shaft (20). Amended claim 13 clarifies that air within the hollow portion is blown out to the exterior through the communication holes (10) when the head placement member is depressed, as noted in the present specification, paragraph bridging pages 26 and 27.

Claims 1 to 14 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nelson et al. (U.S. Patent No. 3,002,201).

Briefly, it is respectfully submitted that Nelson et al. does not disclose or suggest the claimed limitation of "an intermediate pivotable connecting portion" (i.e., similar to the disclosed link shaft 16), which pivotally interconnects the frame members 7 and 8 so that the frame members pivot about the connecting portion, as in the claimed invention. On the contrary, although one of the frame members 7 is arranged inside of the other frame member 8, as shown in FIG. 6, and the frame members 7, 8 are capable of forming an X-shaped configuration under tension of the elastic bands 14 and fabric sections 12 as shown in FIG. 4, the respective frame members are not interconnected by any connecting members about which the frame members pivot respectively. In fact, contrary to this claimed limitation, the cited reference specifically states, "As has been pointed out before, the frame members <u>have no pivotal connection</u> with each other and are freely shiftable to and from a collapsed position." (Column 2, lines 54-57, Emphasis Supplied)

Second, as now set forth in claim 1, according to the present invention the vertical position of a line of action of the spring force of the spring member (21, 26) with respect to the link shaft (16) changes or becomes reversed during compression of the of head placement member. More specifically, as shown in FIG. 6, when the X-shaped links (11) are expanded, the position of the line of action of spring member 21 is below

the link shaft (16), so that the spring (21) acts to bias the X-shaped links to remain expanded, whereas when the X-shaped links are compressed, the line of action of the spring member (21) is shifted or reversed with respect to the link shaft (16), as shown in FIG. 5, so as to be slightly above the link shaft, and hence in the contracted state, the spring (21) acts to bias the X-shaped links (16) in the direction of contraction. Similarly, in the other embodiment of the invention, in the expanded state shown in FIG. 10(a), the spring 26 is positioned vertically above the link shaft 16, whereas in the contracted state shown in FIG. 10(b), the spring 26 becomes reversed in position vertically with respect to the link shaft 16.

Accordingly, it is abundantly clear that Nelson et al. does not disclose or even remotely suggest the above-noted claimed features. On the contrary, Nelson et al. specifically teaches against providing any pivotal connection between the frame members. Further, the claimed mechanism of the spring members, whereby the vertical positional relationship between the line of action of the spring force of the spring member and the pivotable connecting portion reverses in the expanded and contracted states, is not even remotely hinted at in the cited references.

Withdrawal of the rejections, with the allowance of claim 1 and the dependent claims, is respectfully requested.

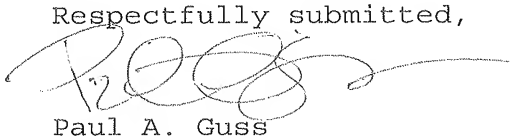
Claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nelson et al. taken further in view of Simmons (U.S. Patent No. 2,668,964).

Simmons has been applied only with respect to the features in claim 15 relating to a backing panel. Clearly, Simmons cannot make up for the deficiencies of the primary reference, Nelson et al., which have been discussed above. Therefore, claim 15 is allowable as a dependent claim, at least for the same reasons as claim 1.

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the claimed invention is not anticipated and would not have been obvious to a person skilled in the art at the time the invention was made, based on the cited prior art of record. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections, in light of the above amendments and remarks, with allowance of claims 1 to 17, is respectfully requested.

Should it be deemed that fees, or deficiencies in fees, are required in connection with this or any accompanying communication, such amounts may be charged to the Attorney's Deposit Account No. 07-2519.

Respectfully submitted,



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